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090730Z Jun 00

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-01
	DODE-00	ANHR-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	OIGO-02	VC-00
	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00
	AC-01	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	STR-00
	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	IIP-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01
	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/013W		
				-----60EB04	090725Z	/38	

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6252
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
ALL EUROPEAN UNION POST COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 003098

SIPDIS

AF FOR A/S RICE, P/DAS POWELL, AND DAS SCHNEIDMAN
AF/S FOR A. RENDER, D. BOOTH, AND C. GURNEY
NSC FOR GAYLE SMITH
PASS USAID FOR A/AID RMCALL AND AFR/SA WJEFFERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/01/10
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ZI](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [ZI](#) [EU](#)
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWEAN ELECTION MONITORS EXPRESS CONCERN ABOUT
INTERNATIONAL ACCREDITATION PROCESS; AMENDMENTS TO ELECTORAL LAW
GAZETTED

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CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR TOM MCDONALD. REASON: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: DOMESTIC ELECTION MONITORS HAVE EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION THAT UN ACCREDITATION OF INTERNATIONAL ELECTION OBSERVERS WILL BE APPROVED BY AN INTER-MINISTERIAL GOVERNMENT BODY, RATHER THAN BY THE ELECTORAL SUPERVISORY COMMISSION (ESC), AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST. (THE SHIFT, RUMORED FOR WEEKS, WAS MADE OFFICIAL IN AMENDED ELECTION REGULATIONS GAZETTED JUNE 7.) THE DOMESTIC MONITORS, WHO VIEW THE ESC AS MORE INDEPENDENT, SEE THIS AS PART OF A BROADER EROSION OF THE ROLE OF THE ESC (TO WHICH THEY REPORT). THEY HAVE SAID THAT THEY MAY REFUSE TO WORK WITH THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS IF THEY ACCEPT ACCREDITATION THROUGH A GOVERNMENT BODY OTHER THAN THE ESC. OBSERVER DELEGATIONS ARE WORKING HARD TO FIND A FORMULA TO PRESERVE THEIR RELATIONS WITH DOMESTIC OBSERVERS WITHOUT JEOPARDIZING THEIR OWN EFFORTS.
END SUMMARY.

DOMESTIC OBSERVERS' CONCERNS

[1](#)2. (C) AT A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH INTERNATIONAL OBSERVER DELEGATIONS FROM THE EU, COMMONWEALTH, IRI/NDI, AND SADC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DOMESTIC MONITORING EFFORT EXPRESSED SERIOUS CONCERN.
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CONCERN ABOUT A MOVE BY THE GOVERNMENT TO SHIFT RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL OBSERVER ACCREDITATION TO AN INTER-MINISTERIAL BODY KNOWN

AS THE ELECTION DIRECTORATE. IN THE PAST, THIS ROLE WAS PLAYED BY THE ELECTORAL SUPERVISORY COMMISSION, WHICH THE NGO'S VIEW AS MORE INDEPENDENT. THE PRIMARY SPOKESMAN FOR THE DOMESTIC OBSERVERS HAS BEEN ISAAC MAPOSA, COORDINATOR OF THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY (NCA), WHICH IS A MEMBER ORGANIZATION IN THE ELECTION SUPPORT NETWORK, A CONSORTIUM OF NGO'S INVOLVED IN ELECTION MONITORING.

[1](#)3. (U) AFTER WEEKS OF UNCERTAINTY OVER WHO WOULD APPROVE ACCREDITATION OF INTERNATIONAL MONITORS, THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTED AMENDMENTS TO ELECTORAL REGULATIONS ASSIGNING THIS TASK TO "THE ELECTION DIRECTORATE, ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS." THE ROLE OF ACCREDITING DOMESTIC MONITORS REMAINS WITH THE ESC. AMONG THE OTHER PROVISIONS OF THE AMENDED REGULATIONS ARE:

-- A PROHIBITION AGAINST MEMBERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES ACTING AS ELECTION MONITORS AT POLLS WHERE A MEMBER OF THEIR PARTY IS CONTESTING (NOTE: ZANU-PF AND THE MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) ARE CONTESTING IN ALL CONSTITUENCIES. END NOTE.);

-- A PROVISION ALLOWING THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL TO REQUIRE DOMESTIC MONITORS TO ATTEND A TRAINING COURSE;

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-- A USD 100 ACCREDITATION FEE FOR INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS.

SINCE THERE IS NO SITTING PARLIAMENT, THE LEGISLATION ENTERS INTO EFFECT IMMEDIATELY.

14. (C) THE DOMESTIC OBSERVERS HAVE TOLD THE UN AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS THAT THEY VIEW THE TRANSFER OF ACCREDITATION APPROVAL TO THE ELECTION DIRECTORATE AS ONE OF A NUMBER OF STEPS THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

HAS TAKEN TO SIDELINE THE ESC, TO WHICH THE DOMESTIC OBSERVERS REPORT, AND CENTRALIZE CONTROL OVER THE ELECTION PROCESS. IN A JUNE 2 MEETING WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION OBSERVER DELEGATION, REPRESENTATIVES OF HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY NGO'S ECHOED THESE CONCERNS.

THE UN'S STANCE

15. (C) BEFORE THE NEW REGULATIONS APPEARED, MAPOSA AND OTHERS URGED THE UN ELECTORAL OFFICE, WHICH IS C